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MEDNEWS-01-16

NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDICAL NEWS (MEDNEWS) IS A WEEKLY COMPENDIUM OF NEWS AND INFORMATION CONTRIBUTED BY COMMANDS THROUGHOUT THE NAVY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

INFORMATION CONTAINED IN MEDNEWS STORIES IS NOT NECESSARILY ENDORSED BY NAVY BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY (BUMED), NOR SHOULD IT BE CONSIDERED OFFICIAL NAVY POLICY.

BUMED DISTRIBUTES MEDNEWS TO SAILORS AND MARINES, THEIR FAMILIES, CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES AND RETIRED NAVY AND MARINE CORPS FAMILIES. FURTHER DISTRIBUTION IS HIGHLY ENCOURAGED.

STORIES IN MEDNEWS USE THESE ABBREVIATIONS AFTER A NAVY MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL'S NAME TO SHOW AFFILIATION: MC - MEDICAL CORPS (PHYSICIAN); DC-DENTAL CORPS; NC-NURSE CORPS; MSC-MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS (CLINICIANS, RESEARCHERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGERS). HOSPITAL CORPSMEN (HM) AND DENTAL TECHNICIAN (DT) DESIGNATORS ARE PLACED IN FRONT OF THEIR NAMES.

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STORIES:

MN011601. NAVY ASSISTS WITH HIV PREVENTION IN AFRICA
SAN DIEGO - AS PART OF A MULTI-AGENCY PROJECT TO HELP COMBAT THE SPREAD OF AIDS IN AFRICA, THE NAVY IS WORKING WITH THE MILITARIES OF SEVERAL AFRICAN NATIONS TO ESTABLISH HIV PREVENTION PROGRAMS.

CDR RICHARD A. SHAFFER, MSC, OF THE NAVAL HEALTH RESEARCH CENTER IN SAN DIEGO, IS THE MANAGER OF DOD'S COMPONENT OF THE LEADERSHIP AND INVESTMENT IN FIGHTING AN EPIDEMIC PROGRAM, OR LIFE. HE SAID MILITARY MEDICAL TEAMS HAVE BEEN GOING TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA SINCE OCTOBER AS PART OF A TWO-YEAR ANTI-AIDS INITIATIVE. COUNTRIES CURRENTLY INVOLVED ARE SOUTH AFRICA, BOTSWANA, ANGOLA, KENYA, BENIN, ZAMBIA, LESOTHO, GHANA, ETHIOPIA AND NIGERIA. OTHER COUNTRIES MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE FUTURE.

OTHER U.S. ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED WITH LIFE INCLUDE THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, AND THE HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.

IN FISCAL 2000, THE LIFE PROGRAM PROVIDED \$100 MILLION IN U.S. SUPPORT FOR HIV/AIDS PREVENTION, CARE AND TREATMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND INDIA. DOD HAS RECEIVED ABOUT \$10 MILLION FOR THEIR PART OF THE PROGRAM.

SHAFFER SAID AS MANY AS A THIRD OF SOME AFRICAN NATION'S MILITARY PERSONNEL MAY BE INFECTED WITH HIV. DOD PERSONNEL ARE ASSISTING MANY OF THOSE MILITARIES IN MEETING THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES:

- ESTABLISH HIV/AIDS-SPECIFIC POLICIES FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL;
- ADAPT AND PROVIDE HIV PREVENTION PROGRAMS;
- TRAIN MILITARY PERSONNEL TO IMPLEMENT, MAINTAIN AND EVALUATE HIV PREVENTION PROGRAMS;
- PROVIDE INFORMATION/TRAINING TO CHANGE HIGH-RISK HIV ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS AMONG MILITARY PERSONNEL;
- INTEGRATE AND MAKE USE OF OTHER U.S. GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND THOSE MANAGED BY ALLIES AND THE UNITED NATIONS.

DOD ALSO SEES AIDS AS A GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN ISSUE THAT IMPACTS U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS, SHAFFER SAID.

"IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT (INTERNATIONAL) STABILITY AND ABOUT MILITARIES ACTUALLY BEING CAPABLE FOR NOT JUST DEFENDING THEIR OWN BORDERS, BUT (ALSO) PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS, THEN YOU WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY DON'T HAVE BIG PROBLEMS WITH A DISEASE SUCH AS HIV," HE CONCLUDED.

BY GERRY J. GILMORE, AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

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MN011602. HM HELPS SAVE INJURED HIKERS

EVERETT, WA - A HIKE FOR A BRANCH MEDICAL CLINIC EVERETT HOSPITAL CORPSMAN TURNED SERIOUS LAST WEEKEND WHEN TWO FELLOW HIKERS FOUND THEMSELVES IN OVER THEIR HEADS.

HM3 ERIC LEMBKE WAS HIKING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS WHEN HE NOTICED TWO OTHER HIKERS AHEAD VENTURING INTO AN OFF LIMITS AREA. CONCERNED FOR THEIR SAFETY, LEMBKE AND HIS PARTY FOLLOWED TO FIND THE COUPLE HAD SLID DOWN A STEEP EMBANKMENT INTO THE COLD STILLAGUAMISH RIVER BELOW.

THE COUPLE MANAGED TO PULL THEMSELVES ONTO A NEARBY ROCK, BUT LEMBKE KNEW THAT HYPOTHERMIA COULD SOON SET IN FROM EXPOSURE TO THE 40-DEGREE WATER. WHILE LEMBKE'S FRIENDS WENT FOR HELP, THE CORPSMAN AND HIS WIFE STAYED BEHIND, LOWERING WATER, FIRST-AID GEAR, A SPACE BLANKET, AND EXTRA CLOTHING TO THE COUPLE TRAPPED BELOW.

RESCUE WORKERS ARRIVED MORE THAN AN HOUR LATER. THEY DECIDED TO CALL IN A HELICOPTER FROM NEARBY MADIGAN ARMY HOSPITAL TO AIRLIFT THE COUPLE OUT. THE WOMAN WAS TREATED FOR A COMPOUND LEG FRACTURE. BOTH WERE TREATED FOR HYPOTHERMIA.

LEMBKE SAID IT WAS HIS NAVY TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE THAT HELPED HIM COPE WITH THE EMERGENCY.

"I'VE BEEN THROUGH THE EMT COURSE AT BANGOR AND I'VE BEEN A CORPSMAN FOR ALMOST SIX YEARS NOW," SAID LEMBKE. "I'M ALSO A VOLUNTEER WITH SNOHOMISH COUNTY'S SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM SO I HAD MOST OF MY GEAR WITH ME JUST IN CASE. IT COULD HAVE BEEN A LOT WORSE."

BY JO2 KRIS KIMBERLING, NAVAL STATION EVERETT, WA

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MN011603. WASP WINS THIRD GREEN H IN A ROW

ONBOARD USS WASP - DECK DIVISION ABOARD USS WASP (LHD 1) BROKE OUT THE CAN OF GREEN PAINT AND A PAINT BRUSH RECENTLY TO PAINT A HASHMARK UNDER ITS GREEN H TO MARK THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW IT'S WON THE WELLNESS UNIT AWARD.

"FOR WASP TO WIN FOR THREE CONSECUTIVE YEARS SHOWS THAT THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT TAKES THIS VERY SERIOUSLY," SAID LT GREGG GELLMAN, MSC, THE SHIP'S MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICER. "EACH YEAR THE REQUIREMENTS GET MORE STRICT. TO WIN THREE YEARS RUNNING SHOWS THAT WE ARE GROWING AS A DEPARTMENT AS WELL."

THE GREEN H IS AWARDED TO SHIPS WHO HAVE EFFECTIVE HEALTH ORIENTED PROGRAMS, SUCH AS INJURY PREVENTION, STRESS MANAGEMENT, TOBACCO CESSATION, EXERCISE, AND NUTRITION.

ONE OF THE WAYS THE SHIP HELPS SAILORS STAY SLIM AND HEALTHY IS TO PROVIDE NUTRITION INFORMATION AT EVERY MEAL, WHICH HELPS SAILORS MAKE HEALTHFUL, BALANCED CHOICES.

BY JO3 KORY M. DEUR, USS WASP

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MN011604. NAVY NURSE RETURNS TO BETHESDA - 55 YEARS LATER

BETHESDA, MD - WHEN ENS FRANCIS CRONIN, NC, WAS STATIONED AT NATIONAL NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER BETHESDA, "THE BOYS" WERE COMING HOME FROM WORLD WAR II.

THE YEAR WAS 1946, AND THE YOUNG NURSE HAD JOINED THE NAVAL RESERVE BECAUSE IT WAS "THE PATRIOTIC THING TO DO." HER STINT AT BETHESDA WAS HER LAST ASSIGNMENT BEFORE MUSTERING OUT.

FRANCIS CRONIN CLANCY, 80, RETURNED TO BETHESDA LAST WEEK TO VISIT AND SHARE MEMORIES OF WHAT THE HOSPITAL WAS LIKE 55 YEARS AGO.

LUNCH AND DINNER, SHE REMEMBERS, WAS SERVED ON WHITE LINEN, AND STEAK WAS SERVED EVERY SUNDAY. VISITORS - ESPECIALLY MALE VISITORS - TO THE NURSES' QUARTERS WERE NOT ALLOWED PAST THE RECEPTION ROOM. TEA WAS SERVED DAILY WHEN THE SHIFT CHANGED. ATTEMPTS MADE TO GET THE NURSES TO MARCH TWICE A WEEK WERE ABANDONED WHEN CHAOS ENSUED.

SHE CALLED HER PATIENTS MARAUDERS - MARINES, BACK FROM THE WAR TO HEAL ON THE "K-5" MEDICAL WARD. THERE WAS A TIME WHEN SHE WORKED FIVE WEEKS STRAIGHT; OTHER TIMES, HER DAYS TUMBLED LATE INTO THE NIGHTS AS SHE CARED FOR THE WOUNDED AND THE SICK.

THE ENSIGN'S TOUR CONCLUDED WITH A CALL ON ANOTHER NAVY NURSE, BETHESDA'S COMMANDER, RADM KATHLEEN MARTIN. TIMES HAVE CHANGED, THEY AGREED.

BY TEAL FERGUSON, NATIONAL NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER BETHESDA

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MN011605. FISHER CLINIC CELEBRATES FIRST ANNIVERSARY

GREAT LAKES, IL - ONE YEAR AGO, THE NEWLY RENOVATED AND DESIGNED NAVAL HOSPITAL GREAT LAKES' BRANCH MEDICAL CLINIC 237 WAS RE-DEDICATED AS THE ZACHARY AND ELIZABETH FISHER CLINIC. IT'S BEEN GETTING RAVE REVIEWS EVER SINCE.

THE CLINIC WAS NAMED TO HONOR THE FISHERS FOR THEIR GREAT SERVICE TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED SERVICES AND THEIR COMPASSION FOR MILITARY MEN AND WOMEN. THE COUPLE FUNDED AND SUPPORTS NUMEROUS FISHER HOUSES, HOMES-AWAY-FROM-HOME FOR THE FAMILIES OF SERIOUSLY ILL INDIVIDUALS.

THE CLINIC SERVES MORE THAN 37,000 BENEFICIARIES, ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF WHOM ARE NEW SAILORS.

"THIS WAS MORE THAN JUST NAMING A MEDICAL FACILITY AFTER A GREAT AMERICAN," SAID CAPT ROBERT NORTH, MC, NH GREAT LAKE'S DIRECTOR OF FLEET MEDICINE. "THE CLINIC ITSELF IS FOCUSING ON MAKING THE PROCESS OF CARE EASIER FOR SERVICE SCHOOL STUDENTS."

BECAUSE OF THE CLINIC'S UNIQUE PATIENT POPULATION, THE CLINIC'S STAFF SPENDS A LOT OF TIME ORIENTING SAILORS ABOUT THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO STAYING HEALTHY.

"OUR MESSAGE IS CLEAR. ONCE YOU GRADUATE FROM RECRUIT TRAINING, YOU MAY FEEL INDESTRUCTIBLE, YOU MAY FEEL TEMPTED TO PUSH THE ENVELOPE AND ENGAGE IN SMOKING OR OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT WILL WEAR DOWN ON YOUR HEALTH. BUT EVERY SAILOR IS A PRECIOUS RESOURCE AND IS VITAL TO OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE," SAID CDR MARK LAMBRECHT, MSC, THE CLINIC'S HEAD.

TO KEEP RECRUITS AND "A" STUDENTS IN CLASS AND NOT WAITING FOR TREATMENT, THE CLINIC HAS EXPANDED SERVICES, ADDING PHYSICAL THERAPY HOURS AND A PART-TIME ORTHOPEDIC SPECIALIST. IT'S ALSO A TRAINING GROUND FOR HOSPITAL CORPSMEN, ALLOWING THEM TO CONDUCT SICK CALL UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF AN EXPERIENCED INDEPENDENT DUTY CORPSMAN (IDC). THE CLINIC ALSO HAS A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR OPTOMETRY STUDENTS AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT INTERNS FROM AREA SCHOOLS.

ACCORDING TO HMCS(SS) MICHAEL WHIPPS, THE CLINIC'S LEADING CHIEF PETTY OFFICER, BRINGING IN THE STUDENTS AND INTERNS HAS COLLATERAL BENEFITS.

"SOME OF THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE NOW CONSIDERING CAREERS IN NAVY MEDICINE."

BY LT YOUSSEF H. ABOUL-ENEIN, MSC, NH GREAT LAKES

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MN011606. MARINES LOOKING FOR OUTSTANDING HM OR DT

WASHINGTON, DC - FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST YEAR, THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE WILL SPONSOR THE HMC GEORGE WILLIAM "DOC" PIERCY AWARD.

THE ANNUAL AWARD RECOGNIZES AN HM OR DT IN A GROUND, LOGISTIC OR AVIATION ELEMENT OF AN OPERATING FORCE UNIT WHO HAS MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO INCREASED COMBAT READINESS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION.

DEADLINE FOR AWARD SUBMISSION IS JUNE 8.

FOR SUBMISSION INFORMATION, CONTACT SSGT L. L. GAWECKI AT HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS, (703) 614-1034/54 OR DSN 224-1034/54.

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MN011607. TRICARE QUESTION AND ANSWER: ACCESS PRIORITY

QUESTION: PLEASE HELP ME TO UNDERSTAND THE SERVICES AVAILABLE WHEN THERE IS AN MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITY (MTF) AVAILABLE. I AM RETIRED AND USE TRICARE STANDARD FOR MY HEALTHCARE. I CALLED THE CENTRAL APPOINTMENT NUMBER. THE OPERATOR SAID THE APPOINTMENTS WERE FILLED FOR THE MONTH BUT THAT I SHOULD CALL BACK FOR NEXT MONTH. I CALLED ON THE FIRST OF THE MONTH AND THE SCHEDULER TOLD ME I HAD TO HAVE TRICARE PRIME TO GET A GYN APPOINTMENT RIGHT AWAY. IS ENROLLING IN TRICARE PRIME THE ONLY WAY TO GET A TIMELY APPOINTMENT?

ANSWER: TRICARE DOES REQUIRE MTFs TO SCHEDULE TRICARE PRIME BENEFICIARIES AHEAD OF ALL OTHER NON-ACTIVE DUTY MEMBERS. THIS CAN FILL THE APPOINTMENT SCHEDULE QUICKLY. FOR QUICKER ACCESS FOR APPOINTMENTS AT THE MTF NEAR YOU, YOU MAY FIND TRICARE PRIME YOUR BEST HEALTHCARE OPTION. TRICARE PRIME ENROLLEES ALWAYS HAVE

PRIMARY ACCESS TO ROUTINE AND URGENT CARE PROVIDED AT THESE FACILITIES.

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MN011608. HEALTHWATCH: SMOKELESS TOBACCO: ADVICE TO CHEW ON THINK A "CHAW" IS THE SAFE ALTERNATIVE TO CIGARETTES OR CIGARS? THINK AGAIN.

ACCORDING TO LCDR WILLIAM MOORE, MSC, HEAD OF THE NAVY'S TOBACCO CESSATION AND ALCOHOL ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS AT THE BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL, MANY PEOPLE THINK SMOKELESS TOBACCO IS A SAFE ALTERNATIVE TO SMOKING. BUT IN REALITY, IT'S HIGHLY ADDICTIVE AND CAN CAUSE ORAL CANCER, ALONG WITH A HOST OF OTHER UNPLEASANT SYMPTOMS RANGING FROM BAD BREATH TO TOOTH AND GUM DISEASE TO TOOTH LOSS.

SO WHY DO PEOPLE STILL USE THE PRODUCTS? PERHAPS TO SATISFY A NICOTINE CRAVING OR EVEN TO LOOK COOL ON THE BALL FIELD. BUT WHETHER IT'S NICOTINE ADDICTION OR SOCIAL MOTIVATION, THE SMOKELESS TOBACCO USER IS GOING TO STRIKE OUT.

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF SMOKELESS TOBACCO - CHEW AND SNUFF. CHEWING TOBACCO IS A BULKY, LEAFY FORM OF TOBACCO THAT IS PACKAGED AS LOOSE LEAF, PLUGS OR TWISTS. SNUFF IS FINELY GROUND OR SHREDDED TOBACCO THAT COMES IN SMALL CANISTERS. BOTH CHEW AND SNUFF CONTAIN HIGH CONCENTRATIONS OF NICOTINE AND ARE ADDICTIVE.

SMOKELESS TOBACCO HAS SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS ON THE USER'S HEALTH AND WELL BEING. THE UNSIGHTLY HABIT OF CONTINUALLY SPITTING IS NOT APPEALING, NOT TO MENTION THE INEVITABLE EFFECTS OF TOOTH DISCOLORATION AND BAD BREATH. THE LIKELIHOOD OF LOSING TEETH OR GETTING ORAL CANCER WITH LONG-TERM USE IS OFTEN THE MOST CONVINCING REASON FOR USERS TO STOP.

SMOKELESS TOBACCO CONTAINS ABRASIVE GRIT THAT SCRATCHES THE SURFACE OF TEETH AND EVENTUALLY WEARS AWAY THE ENAMEL. LOSS OF TOOTH ENAMEL CAN CAUSE ADDED SENSITIVITY AND MAY REQUIRE CORRECTIVE TREATMENT. SMOKELESS TOBACCO PRODUCTS ALSO CONTAIN SUGAR, ADDED DURING THE CURING PROCESS TO IMPROVE TASTE, WHICH LEADS TO TOOTH DECAY.

CONTINUOUS IRRITATION TO THE SPOT IN THE MOUTH WHERE THE SMOKELESS TOBACCO IS PLACED CAN RESULT IN PERMANENT DAMAGE TO THE GUMS. GUMS PULL AWAY FROM TEETH, EXPOSING ROOT SURFACES AND LEAVING TEETH SENSITIVE TO HEAT AND COLD. IT ALSO CAN CAUSE EROSION OF CRITICAL BONE SUPPORT, WHICH LEADS TO LOOSENEED TEETH THAT CAN PERMANENTLY BE LOST.

ALMOST ALL OF THE 30,000 CASES OF ORAL CANCER EACH YEAR ARE OF SMOKELESS TOBACCO USERS. SMOKELESS TOBACCO CONTAINS CARCINOGENS, WHICH CAN CAUSE A CANCER OF THE MOUTH CALLED LEUKOPLAKIA. LEUKOPLAKIA CAN OCCUR WHEN TOBACCO AND ITS IRRITATING JUICES ARE LEFT IN CONTACT WITH GUMS, CHEEKS OR LIPS FOR PROLONGED PERIODS OF TIME. IT APPEARS EITHER AS A SMOOTH, WHITE PATCH OR AS LEATHERY-LOOKING WRINKLED SKIN.

OTHER CANCER-CAUSING AGENTS THAT ARE IN SMOKELESS TOBACCO PRODUCTS CAN LEAD TO INCREASED CANCER RISK NOT ONLY OF THE MOUTH, BUT ALSO THE PHARYNX, LARYNX AND ESOPHAGUS. USERS WHO SWALLOW TOBACCO INCREASE THE RISK OF ESOPHAGEAL DAMAGE AND STOMACH ULCERS.

WHETHER THE USER IS ADDICTED TO THE NICOTINE IN SMOKELESS TOBACCO OR JUST USES IT RECREATIONALLY, IT'S A SMART MOVE TO STOP USING TOBACCO. SOME MAY FIND THAT THEY CAN QUIT COLD TURKEY - OTHERS MAY NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT.

SO, WHAT IS THE NAVY'S POLICY ON SMOKELESS TOBACCO? USE OF SMOKELESS TOBACCO IS PROHIBITED DURING BRIEFINGS, MEETINGS, CLASSES, FORMATIONS, INSPECTIONS, WHILE ON WATCH, AND IN ALL OTHER SITUATIONS WHERE PROPER DECORUM IS REQUIRED.

THE NAVY HAS EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS TO HELP SAILORS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS QUIT SMOKING AND SMOKELESS TOBACCO. CONTACT YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER OR STOP BY YOUR FAMILY SERVICE CENTER FOR MORE INFORMATION.

BY NICOLE DEANER, BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY

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COMMENTS AND IDEAS FOR MEDNEWS ARE WELCOME. STORY SUBMISSIONS ARE HIGHLY ENCOURAGED. CONTACT MEDNEWS EDITOR AT EMAIL: MEDNEWS@US.MED.NAVY.MIL; TELEPHONE 202-762-3218, (DSN) 762; OR FAX 202-762-3224.